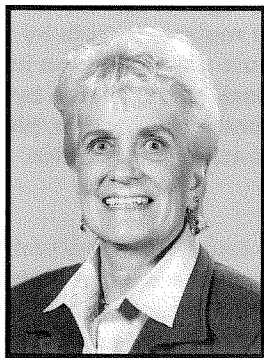


Hammerstrom's Hotline

for the people
in the 17th Senate District



State Senator
Bev Hammerstrom

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CONSUMERS ADVISED TO BE AWARE OF NEW INTERNET SCAM Consumers who conduct online financial transactions need to be aware of a new Internet scam known as "pharming." Pharming occurs when a computer browser is redirected from a commercial website to a fake site in an attempt to steal personal information. The fake website looks similar to the legitimate site, but captures personal data, such as login names, passwords and other sensitive information. To protect against pharming, consumers should be sure secure websites contain HTTPS in their browser address and never click "yes" to a security alert question. In addition, consumers can also protect themselves by installing and updating personal firewall protection programs, as well as anti-virus and anti-spyware programs. For more information on how to protect against Internet scams, including pharming, visit the Attorney General's website at www.michigan.gov/ag.

DID YOU KNOW? Consumers can check the credibility of a website's security by double clicking on the padlock icon in the web browser. An illegitimate site will either not have a certificate, or the certificate owned will not be related to the legitimate entity.

SENATE INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO PREVENT ONLINE SEX CRIMES The Michigan Senate recently introduced legislation that helps prevent online sex crimes. Senate Bills 1479 and 1480 would prohibit convicted sex offenders from using social networking websites, such as MySpace. Under this legislation, a person convicted of a past sexual offense involving a computer could not access a commercial social networking website. Sexual offenders who did not use computers to commit the offense could not directly contact an individual, whom he or she knew or had reason to believe was under the age of 18, through a social networking website. The legislation is currently awaiting consideration in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

DEADLINE FOR VOTER REGISTRATION IS OCTOBER 10 Michigan residents who have not yet registered to vote must do so quickly in order to be eligible to participate in the November General election. In addition to being a resident of this state, you also must be at least 18 years old by the date of the election and be a United States citizen. You can register at any Secretary of State branch office or county, city or township clerk's office. You may also register to vote by mail and forms are available at your local clerk's office or from the Secretary of State website. If you register to vote by mail or you have moved to a new voting jurisdiction or are registering for the very first time, you must vote in person in the first election in which you participate. The only exceptions are if you are 60 years old or older, disabled as defined by law or temporarily living overseas. For more information in regard to registering to vote or the upcoming election, please visit the Secretary of State's website at www.michigan.gov/sos, or your local county, city or township clerk's office. The last day to register to vote is Tuesday, October 10.

STATE LAUNCHES NEW EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEBSITE The State of Michigan recently launched a new website aimed at providing proactive emergency planning information for individuals, families and businesses. The website, www.michigan.gov/prepare, was created in an effort to educate the public on what to do during a potential emergency crisis. Citizens visiting this site will receive the latest available information on family preparedness, chemical, biological and radiological emergencies, natural disasters and severe weather. The site also contains links to state and federal resources and offers information on how to prepare and protect against possible emergencies.

If you would like to receive future issues of Hammerstrom's Hotline via e-mail,
please contact me at SenBHammerstrom@senate.michigan.gov